

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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INFO AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABARONE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0326

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OAU PORG RH WA
SUBJ: OAU AND ZIMBABWE

REF: ADDIS ABABA 0122

SUMMARY: OAU ASST SEC GEN FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS PETER ONU, INDICATED OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE WOULD ENDORSE DECISION BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS TO SUPPORT PATRIOTIC FRONT. NU DOWNPLAYED BISHOP MUZOREWA'S POLITICAL STRENGTH, AND STATED MUZOREWA NOW "TEAMED UP WITH ENEMY". ONU NOTED THAT DOOR STILL OPEN, HOWEVER, FOR MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE TO JOIN PATRIOTIC FRONT. HE EXPRESSED VIEW USG SHOULD PUSH UK TO DO MORE TO SOLVE ZIMBABWE PROBLEM AND US SHOULD CONSIDER SECOND, INDEPENDENT INITIATIVE ON ZIMBABWE.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN COURSE OF TOUR D'HORIZON WITH EMBOFFW, OAU ASST SEC GEN
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FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS PETER ONU COMMENTED ON BOTH RECENT RECOGNITION OF PATRIOTIC FRONT BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS AND POWER STRUGGLE AMONG LEADERSHIP VARIOUS ZIMBABWE POLITICAL GROUPINGS. ONU INDICATED OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE WOULD ENDORSE DECISION BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS TO SUPPORT PATRIOTIC FRONT DURING ITS LUSAKA MEETING JANUARY 29-FEBRUARY 3. HE SAID BISHOP MUZOREWA HAD "TEAMED UP WITH ENEMY". MOREOVER, NKOMO HAD BOTH AN ARMY,

AND A POLITICAL MACHINE AND ROBERT MUGABE HAD AN
AN ARMY, WHEREAS NEITHER SITHOLE OR MUZOREWA HAD TROOPS IN FIELD.

2. TURNING TO THE RISE OF MUSOREWA, ONU STATE MUZOREWA HAD
BEEN INVITED INTO ZIMBABWE POLITICS BY HOSHUA NKOMO AT TIME
OF PEARCE COMMISSION. NKOMO WAS THEN IN PRISON. MOZOREQA
ACCEPTED NKOMO'S OFFER AND PEARCE COMMISSION'S REPORT
WAS THROWN OUT. STATING THAT MUZOREWA HAD KEPT THE ANC
RUNNING WHILE OTHER LEADERSHIP IN PRISON AND HAD APPARENTLY
FOUND POWER TO HIS LIKING. ONU NOTED THAT MUZOREWA HAD BEEN
GIVEN LEADERSHIP ON BASIS OF PROMISE THAT HE WOULD CALL FOR
CONFERENCE AND ELECTIONS WITHIN 4 MONTHS OF RELEASE OF LEADER-
SHIP. MUZOREWA HAD NOT DONE SO, AND IN HIS ABSENCE NKOMO HAD
CALLED CONFERENCE AND WAS ELECTED. MUZOREWA HAD ALLEGEDLY OP-
POSED CONFERENCE ON GROUNDS THAT TIMING INOPPORTUNE. ONU ALSO
DISCOUNTED MUZOREW'S PERSONAL POWER BASE, INDICATING THAT DE-
MONSTRATIONS IN SUPPORT OF BISHOP WERE REFLECTION HIS POSITION
RELIGIOUS LEADER, RATHER THAN POLITICAL BACKING. ONU CLOSED
BY NOTING ZANU AND ZAPU WERE LONG, ESTABLISHED BODIES, AND THAT
STRUGGLE.

3. TURNING TO LUSAKA MEETING, NOU STATED THAT OAU WOULD GET
FULL INFORMATION ON MUZOREWA, AS WELL AS REASON FOR DECISION
BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS. HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT DOOR WAS
STILL OPEN, HOWEVER, FOR MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE TO JOIN
PATRIOTIC FRONT. ONU NOTED SIMILARITIES BETWEEN
ANGOLA AND ZIMBABWE, AND MISTAKES MADE IN HANDLING ANGOLA
SITUATION, WHICH OAU DID NOT WISH REPEAT.

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4. AKSED IF OAU UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT PRESENT SITUATION WHERE
FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS ACTING FOR ENTIRE OAU MEMBERSHIP WITHOUT
CLEAR AUTHORIZATION AND PERHAPS CONTRARY TO PAST DECISIONS OF
OAU MINISTERIAL, ONU INDICATED NO REAL PROBLEMS EXISTED.
"MAJORITY OF AOU MEMBERSHIP" ACCEPTED DECISION OF FRONTLINE
PRESIDENTS. IN ADDITION, PAST DECISION TO SUPPORT SEVERAL
LIBERATION FRONTS HAD BEEN MADE AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL, AND IT
CLEAR "PRESIDENTS " COULD OVERRULE "MINISTERS".

5. TURNING TO SUBJECT OF MAJORITY RULE, ONU NOTED THAT OAU KNEW
ANDREW YONG VERY WELL AND FAVORABLY. HE HOPED US WOULD AGAIN
START BALL ROLLING IN ZIMBABWE AND CARRY POSITION OF USG SUPPORT
FOR MAJORITY RULE TO ITS LOGICAL CONCLUSION. IN HIS VIEW, USG
SHOULD PUSH BRITAIN TO DO MORE, NOTING THAT IF US INTERESTED
IN PROTECTION OF MINORITY RIGHTS, IT HAD TO REALIZE THAT THOSE
RIGHTS COULD ONLY BE PROTECTED BY PEACEFUL TRANSITION OF
POWER. NOTING IAN SMITH'S OBJECTION TO GREATER BRITISH INVOLVE-
MENT, ONU DICATED HIS VIEW THAT SMITH MORE INTERESTED IN
PRESERVING HIS OWN POLITICAL POWER THAN PROTECTING WHITE

COMMUNITY IN RHODESIA. ONU STATED THAT US SHOULD DO SOMETHING SEPARATE FROM IVOR RICHARD'S EFFORT AND THAT RICHARD "TALKED TOO MUCH". IN THIS CONTEXT, ONU NOTED THAT IN CONTRAST TO U.S., BRITAIN DID NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT INFLUENCE OVER VORSTER AND SOUTH AFRICA.

6. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM EMBOFF ABOUT POSSIBLE REASONS FOR RECENT QUIET ON NAMIBIAN QUESTION, ONU REFERRED EMBOFFS TO DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND SECRETARY'S INITIATIVE, CLAIMING THAT ANSWER COULD NOT DOUBT BE FOUND IN WASHINGTON. COMMENT: FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT, IT APPEARS THAT THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS CALLING THE TUNE AND THE OAU DOING ITS BEST TO KEEP IN STEP WITH THE MUSIC.
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